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The Centennial History Of

First Presbyterian Church

Hickory, N. C.

1873 - 1973

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The Centennial History Of

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Hickory, N. C.

By

Mrs. Edmond H. Smith, Jr.

Mr. Gerald B. Hurst

FOREWORD

Hickory's FIRST Presbyterian church officially began 100 years ago, March 18, 1873, as "Gibb's Mission", with just 15 charter members. At the beginning of 1973, the active membership of First Presbyterian Church of Hickory totaled 867, and three additional Hickory-area Presbyterian churches spawned by this church had a combined membership of 471.

Who were some of the people and what were some of the events involved in the growth and changes in this church in its first century? After considerable research, this Centennial History has been prepared to give the present membership of this church the facts, plus a deeper understanding and appreciation of our heritage, as our church begins its second century.

Extensive use has been made of two previous histories of this church, both written by men who had served as Clerk of the Session for many years. One was Dr. William Beall Ramsay, who prepared a history for the church's 50th anniversary in 1923. The second was Josiah J. Willard, whose "Historical Sketch" was published in 1949, in observance of the completion of the remodeling of the Sanctuary building.*

Other sources for information used in writing this Centennial History included: a history of the Women of our Church, prepared in 1962 by Mrs. Ava Robinson Lipe; "Sixty Years of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Synod of North Carolina," written by a former pastor of this church, the Rev. John G. Garth; the archives of this church and of the Presbyterian Historical Society at Montreat.

In order to add some human interest to facts, comments were requested from the "daughters and sons" of this congregation who have gone into some type of church work; and "reminiscences" were secured from the eight members of this church who have held membership continuously for more than 60 years: Miss Rosa Lee Dixon, Connolly Gamble, Sr., Mrs. Raymond Hefner, William W. McComb, Mr. and Mrs. C. Voorhees Garth, Miss Millie Kate McComb, and Donald S. Menzies.

The chapters that follow will give you an opportunity to share in the early life, the growth, and the outreach of this church and its organizations, and to feel some of the influence of the various ministers who helped to inspire and guide this church in its first 100 years.

It is regretted that time and space would allow mention of only a relative few of the hundreds of members who have served this church so faithfully in so many ways through the years. Those named just happened to be involved in the facts or human interest items that compose this history.

It is our hope that you will find this book interesting and informative and worth preserving for future reference.

*Grandfather of Mrs. Shuford Abernethy, Mrs. Guy Gregg, and W. R. Hall of our present membership.

CHAPTER I (1873-1891)

ORGANIZATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

One hundred years ago, North Carolina was struggling to meet the demands and excesses of Reconstruction. Money was scarce, prices were high and an attitude of demoralization and greed prevailed throughout the South. Yet despite the dark clouds which hung heavy over our state and her southern sisters, the light of the Christian spirit burned steady. As the state attempted to reorganize its governmental structure, the Presbyterian Synod of North Carolina was going about the business of reviving the Lord's work. Recognizing the temper of the times, the synod focused its attention upon Christian families, calling upon them "to look to their children and to teach them the fear of God and obedience to lawful authority." Following up on its appeal to families, synod next turned its attention to all people, calling them "to prayer and to arise and rebuild the waste places, and urging them to the support of evangelists and missionaries." Although it was synod that was pricking the consciences of North Carolina Presbyterians, it was on the level of presbytery that the responsibility for mission and evangelization was directed.

It was in the fulfillment of this responsibility that:

> "after due consideration, Presbytery, meeting at Bethpage Church, appointed the Reverend W. A. Wood and the Reverend G. M. Gibbs as a committee to visit the village of Hickory at their earliest convenience and, if way be clear, to organize a church."

The planting of the seed of Presbyterianism at Hickory Station came as a direct result of Concord Presbytery's push to evangelize its western areas. The men they sent to set up and organize this church were ordained evangelists, able to perform their roles as ministers of the gospel without the customary support of a session. They were ordained agents of presbytery, hardy and dedicated men who were willing and able to bring the gospel message to the outpost regions of western North Carolina. It was at the April, 1873 meeting of Concord Presbytery at Third Creek Church that the Reverend Mr. Wood rendered the following report:

> "The committee appointed to organize a church at Hickory Station reported that on the 18th of March last, they organized a church at Hickory Station, Catawba County, of 15 members, and ordained two elders, and installed three (one of them having been ordained) in said church, and recommended that the name of the church be 'Gibb's Mission'."

At that first organizational meeting, held in the Methodist church, the following names were received into membership of Gibbs Mission Presbyterian Church: Mrs. M. C. Baird, Rock Hill, S. C.; Mrs. J. R. Bell, Lincolnton; Mrs. G. M. Gibbs, Miss C. S. Gibbs, Mr. R. W. Gibbs and Miss Anna T. Gibbs, Mocksville; Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Hussey, Newton; Mrs. Caroline Bost, Newton; Mr. J. G. Hall, Wilkesborough; and Dr. and Mrs. B. F. Terry,

Hampden-Sidney, Virginia[1]. The Reverend G. M. Gibbs, at 66 years of age, became the first minister.

The year following its organization, the Hickory church reported to presbytery an increase in total communicants to 23 and that the salary actually paid to the Reverend Mr. Gibbs to date totalled $112.00.[2]

It seems noteworthy, drawing from an earlier history, to point out the earliest representation our church elected to its various courts:

> "Doctor Terry was the first representative to Presbytery (meeting at Third Creek) and to Synod (meeting at Wilmington). Doctor Terry, Mr. J. G. Hall, Mr. J. B. Hussey were the first elders, while Mr. Seagle and Mr. Johnson were the first deacons. . ."

The rapid growth of our state and our country during and following the Reconstruction era was too fast-paced for the seminaries to meet the demand for parish ministers and evangelists. This necessitated not only the evangelical skills of Mr. Gibbs elsewhere in the synod, but also a joint sharing of our first regular pastor with churches in Taylorsville and Wilkesborough.

[1] There is a discrepancy between this list of members and the number of total members which appears in previous histories and in the first statistical report to presbytery. No reason for this discrepancy has been turned up to date.

[2] This is a correction of Mr. Willard's earlier account that the first report to presbytery was in April of 1876.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —— 1878-1906

THE REVEREND THOMAS G. THURSTON (1879-1884)

The year 1878 was an important one in the early history of our church. It was a year that the young church began to extend its roots and assume some of the strength of permanence. The church had extended a call to the Reverend Thomas G. Thurston, a resident at that time of Taylorsville, for one-third of his time. He accepted the call one year later at a salary recorded to be $250.00 annually. That year of 1878 also marked the changing of the name from Gibbs' Mission to Hickory church. And toward the close of that year, the church's first building was completed and dedicated. This first building stood on a lot bought from a Mr. Henry W. Robinson for $100.00. That lot is now the N. W. corner of S. Center Street at Main Avenue Place. The total cost of the building and lot was only $1,769.23. As the phrase goes, it was a VERY good year for the Presbyterians of Hickory.

Two of the events most remembered about the early churches were the first baptism and the first wedding. Mr. William Alexander Hall, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Hall, was the first infant baptized in the old church, the sacrament being administered in November 1874. The son and grandson of Mr. William A. Hall are presently members of our congregation, with the distinction of being the only current members who can trace their lineage back to a charter member of the original Gibbs' Mission church.[3] The first wedding to be celebrated in the new structure was that of Miss Betty Hamilton to Mr. William H. Sprunt of Wilmington, North Carolina. The ceremony took place on December 22, 1881, the bride being the daughter of Ruling Elder and Mrs. H. C. Hamilton.

Up to the time the first structure was completed, the early congregation worshiped in the first building of the old Reformed church (now Corinth United Church of Christ). Later, the Episcopalians and a Lutheran congregation were given use of the Presbyterian building. As Mr. Willard puts it:

> "one of the outstanding features in the life of this church has been the delightful fraternal relations that have been enjoyed by our people with other denominations in the community."

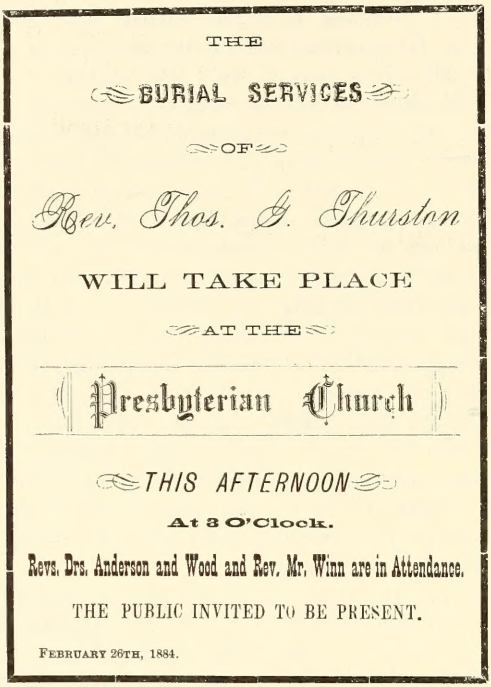
The Reverend Mr. Thurston was a man who represented many of the dimensions inherent within the Presbyterian church. The son of the first missionary to the Hawaiian Islands, he was educated at Yale and at Union Theological Seminary in New York. He was also a teacher and an ordained evangelist when called by the Hickory Presbyterian Church. Mr. Thurston enjoyed a gracious ministry in this church. As stated in our sessional records:

> "His was a life of good works. Gifted with intellectual powers not often found, even in the Christian ministry, with a heart full of love for God . . . he spent all that we might be saved, and that others might be brought to Jesus."

It was with a sense of profound sadness that the congregation buried the

[3] The descendants of William A. Hall are Rufus D. and Roger Hall.

Reverend Mr. Thurston and his daughter, Alice, after they were drowned attempting to ford the Catawba River en route to Taylorsville in March of 1884. Some of the oldest documents of our church reflect the mourning of this beloved pastor.



THE

BURIAL SERVICES

OF

Rev. Thos. G. Thurston

WILL TAKE PLACE

AT THE

Presbyterian Church

THIS AFTERNOON

At 3 O'Clock.

Revs. Drs. Anderson and Wood and Rev. Mr. Winn are in Attendance.

THE PUBLIC INVITED TO BE PRESENT.

FEBRUARY 26TH, 1884.

THE REVEREND COLIN A. MUNROE, D. D. (1885-1891)

The pastor succeeding Mr. Thurston was Dr. Colin A. Munroe. He was called for one-half of his time, a division of labor which the church worked out with the Presbyterian church in Lenoir. His salary was to be $400.00 annually. Reverend Munroe has the honor of being our first minister to publish a book. While a member of Concord Presbytery, he authored PIONEERS OF PRESBYTERIANISM IN NORTH CAROLINA.

During Doctor Munroe's years as pastor of this church, both synod and presbytery were emphasizing the great need for improvement in family worship and a stronger emphasis within the congregation on Biblical instruction and Christian mission. One of the results of this denominational push was the formation of the Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society, an organization about which you will read in a later chapter.

Throughout the decade of the 1880's, the Presbyterian Synod of North Carolina experienced considerable growth, an expansion due in large measure to the devoted efforts of evangelists operating through the six presbyteries of synod. The Hickory Presbyterian Church experienced a parallel growth during these years under the dedicated, albeit part-time ministries of pastors Thurston and Munroe. At the annual meeting of synod in 1891, the year Dr.

Munroe left this church to assume full-time responsibility for the church in Lenoir, the Address to the Churches on the State of Religion contained the following paragraph:

> "Surely it is unusual for the Synod to receive from the Presbyteries, and through them from the churches, so much that is cheering, with so little that is disheartening. Usually our pathway through the year is marked by alternations of light and shade in something like equal proportions. But through the past year the sunshine has rested on our way in long, bright stretches, while the shadows have been mere flecks. Our Divine Master has smiled upon all four seasons, and each has yielded a rich harvest to the praise of the glory of His grace. . .The Synod, therefore, calls upon all its churches to gird themselves for fresh labors, and to address themselves with intensified earnestness and zeal to the glorious work of bringing the world to Christ."

As we read this tribute and challenge to the churches, our own included, we may recall the manner in which our church was organized. Our first century started because of an earnest desire to evangelize the remote areas of our state. As we stand on the threshold of our second century, the final line in the synodical minutes of "bringing the world to Christ" echoes the modern challenge to our Church of calling our continent to Christ.

CHAPTER II (1891-1927)

THE REVEREND J. ALSTON RAMSAY, D. D., (1891-1900)

With around 100 members, the church progressed to securing its first full-time pastor June 5, 1891. He was the Rev. J. Alston Ramsay, D. D., grandfather of one of our present members, Mrs. Ervin Williams. Although Dr. Ramsay's annual salary was only $900, the church could afford his exclusive attention for just three years. As related in our 1923 Church History:

> "The church was greatly crippled financially. . .(during the nationwide financial panic of 1894). . .and had to surrender a part of the pastor's time. The Newton church called our pastor for one-fourth of his time. This relation continued throughout the remainder of his pastorate."

As Mr. Willard related in his Historical Sketch:

> "Once there was due the pastor $56.50 on his salary. The deacons were instructed to 'collect the money and pay the debt.' And the record continues, 'If not, let the officers come to the next meeting prepared to pay it themselves.' Evidently, the brethren were successful. . .as nothing further on the subject was recorded.
>
> "Again, one of the brethren was appointed to engage the services of an organist, but was not given authority to mention a stipend. In an unguarded moment, and perhaps out of the goodness of his heart, he promised the lady $7.50 a quarter ($2.50 a month) and reported it to the Session. After much discussion (and no doubt with some perspiration and red faces) his action was confirmed and the contract was carried out in a graceful manner."

A significant event during Dr. Ramsay's ministry was the purchase of the first manse. It was located on First Avenue Northwest, next to the present First Baptist Church Educational Building. The Earnest Workers, a group of the church women organized about 1887, are credited with having purchased and largely paid for the manse.

Connolly Gamble, member here since 1902, recalls going often to the manse, located near his home. He lay on the floor of the pastor's study, reading the books there. He says their relationship was so close that the preacher's worn-out pants were cut down by Mrs. Gamble to make pants for little Connolly.

A noteworthy date in Dr. Ramsay's pastorate was September 21, 1891. That's when the Woman's Missionary Society was organized to study and support Home Missions and Foreign Missions. According to our 1923 Church History, the pastor had to serve as the Society's first president because "the women were so possessed by the idea that women should keep silent in public that none was willing to assume leadership."

Synodical Home Missions had begun in 1888, one year before Dr. Ramsay was elected stated clerk of Concord Presbytery, a position he held for 13 years. Apparently he felt the cause of Home Missions keenly, for minutes of the Missionary Society describe his giving "stirring" programs on the subject. The cause of Foreign Missions took on a new meaning for the church when, in 1897, one of the W. M. S. members, Dr. Mattie Ingold Tate, went as a medical missionary to Korea.

Miss Rosa Lee Dixon, member of this church since 1900, was a child in the congregation during Dr. Ramsay's pastorate. Her recollection is that young people were "supposed to attend two church services, besides Sunday School," and prayer meeting on Wednesday night; and that the only attention they received was at Christmas and at the annual picnic in the summer. Here is how she remembers one Christmas:

> "Plans were made to build a chimney on the pulpit stand, with stiff paper bricks, red in color. Our treat, in the form of 'store-bought' candy, was contained in these (brick) boxes. . .We had practiced a number of Christmas songs. Santa Claus, impersonated by Mr. Ingold, Mrs. Joy's brother, arrived. All of us were eager for the expected delicious bricks. Alas! The candy was so stale that we could not eat it. That left us with no hope for any notice until the following summer when we had the annual Sunday School picnic at Catawba Springs. . .(and) never did I learn

to enjoy that ride of about eight miles on a rough farm wagon with only hay to sit on."

Attention to children was exhibited very tangibly in the North Carolina Synod during Dr. Ramsay's ministry. Barium Springs Orphanage opened in January 1891, with 28 children. In 1896, our women began sending Christmas cakes to Barium, a practice which has become an annual tradition for our Women of the Church.

Something of the loss felt by the congregation when Dr. Ramsay died January 11, 1900, is shown by a resolution recorded in the Minute Book of the Woman's Missionary Society. One section reads:

"His faith was a living faith, shining out in his everyday life in deeds and character. . .endearing himself to the hearts of his people and making him esteemed in the whole community."

THE REVEREND W. T. MATTHEWS (1900-1903)

Three months after Dr. Ramsay's death, the Rev. W. T. Matthews became pastor of both the Hickory and Newton churches.

A fine memory of the Rev. Mr. Matthews is held by the Rev. James Woodrow Hassell, a son of our congregation.

"I know that when a preacher's sermon is remembered for a week, he is gratified. But although it has been more than seventy years, I recall vividly one of Mr. Matthews' sermons–the text and the message. The words of the text are: 'I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness'."

Mr. Hassell also recalled: "My early connection with Hickory First Presbyterian Church was all too brief, but was of the most pleasant and profitable character. I was a lad of only sixteen, and the year was 1902. . .Everybody was content to sit on rather rude, hard benches, while the building was heated by a large round stove located in the center. . .The congregation was small but the spirit was friendly and cordial."

Mr. Hassell spent many years as a missionary to Japan; in recent years, he has enjoyed a busy "retirement" in Hickory.

It was during the Rev. Mr. Matthews' pastorate that the lot on which our present Sanctuary stands was purchased for $950, and plans were completed for erecting the new church.

Miss Rosa Lee Dixon recalls why it became necessary to change the location of the church. The first church was built near the railroad, and when the number of trains was increased, "our ministers could not cope with the increased noise."

The proximity of the railroad tracks to the little church is very vividly recalled by Donald S. Menzies (who joined the church in 1911). He remembers getting a "licking" from his father, K. C. Menzies, who had seen Donald hitch a ride on a slow-moving freight train from a crossing not too far from his house to the crossing near the church. Donald recalls that one of his first church jobs was hand-setting the type for the bulletins.

Miss Millie Kate McComb (member since 1908) remembers the Christmas

"exercises" as the highlight of the year in her childhood in the little white church. A tree with lighted candles was erected, and the children gave a program of songs which they had long practiced. The boys and girls took to church bags of fruit and candy to be sent to the orphans at Barium Springs.

Mr. Matthews resigned September 4, 1903, to accept a call to a church in Durant, Oklahoma.

THE REVEREND C. W. TRAWICK (1904-1907)

It was during the pastorate of the Rev. C. W. Trawick that our present Sanctuary building was erected and dedicated.

He came to the church March 6, 1904, full-time, since the congregation was once again able to pay a salary of $900 a year. The good financial condition of the church is also indicated by the following from the Session records:

"Our new church having been completed and paid for was dedicated to the worship of Almighty God on December 2, 1906. At the dedication the building committee reported the cost of erecting and furnishing the church totaled $14,060."

William (Bill) W. McComb (member since 1906) remembers that he and a cousin, Frank McComb, used a horse and wagon to help move some benches and the bell from the white church to the new church. Our present Sanctuary bell is the original church bell.

Among the items moved to the new church was the small organ. Several of

our longest-affiliated members associate this organ primarily with an early organist, Miss Lois Seagle, noted for being "full of fun" as well as for being a fine musician.

Miss McComb recalls that Miss Seagle delighted in slyly winking at the girls in the congregation at the little white church. This would start the girls to giggling; and, in the case of the McComb girls, the punishment from their father was to deny them dessert for Sunday dinner. As her brother, Bill McComb, expressed it: "Older church members were very austere people back then."

Connolly Gamble, choir member for some 65 years, to the present, also vividly recalls that early organ and Miss Seagle. As a young boy, it was his duty to pump the organ, which sat near the pulpit and put him, and his habit of falling asleep during the sermon, in full view of the congregation. In those early days, according to Mr. Gamble, every choir member had to be approved by the Session, who, he jokingly states, were more interested in whether the prospective members "had sinned" than whether they could sing! In fact, an elder came to each choir practice, often nodding near the pot-bellied stove and being startled awake by some "organ antics" of Miss Seagle!

Less than a year after the new church was dedicated, the Rev. Mr. Trawick had to resign because of ill health. During the last four months of his pastorate, the Rev. C. W. Squires served as supply pastor. The Rev. J. M. Wharey, D. D., supplied from September, 1907, when the Rev. Mr. Trawick left, until May, 1908.

THE REVEREND JOHN G. GARTH (1907-1918)

The second longest pastorate (over ten years) in our church's history was that of the Rev. John G. Garth. He was the father of C. Voorhees Garth, who joined this church when his father came here July 27, 1908, and has held membership and many responsibilities ever since.

A few months before the Rev. Mr. Garth began his work here, a committee had been appointed to sell the old manse and to build a new one on the Third Avenue lot adjoining the Sanctuary lot. (Later the "new" manse was moved one lot west to make room for our first educational building. After many years of use as the manse, it became the present "Manster".)

While the new manse was under construction, the Garths lived temporarily in the house now occupied by the W. W. McComb family. Miss Millie Kate McComb recalls an occasion when the new minister took his own three children and the four McComb children to the circus. As the group walked the long distance to the circus grounds, other Presbyterian children joined them. As she described it: "By the time we got there, we had our own circus." Miss McComb said this was typical of the Garths, who later shared the new manse with young people from the congregation, particularly for fun gatherings on Saturday nights.

The Rev. Mr. Garth was called at an annual salary of $1,000. When he left over ten years later, it has been increased three times to $1,500. Voorhees Garth recalls that, to make ends meet, the preacher's family had a cow, chickens, and a garden back of the manse; and that the occasional

"poundings"* by the congregation helped greatly. Voorhees and his brother, Robert, performed many "free" church services, including printing the church bulletins on a hand press, mowing and raking the church lawn property, and pumping the organ.

The organ-pumping duties ended in 1910 when the congregation voted to purchase an Estey pipe organ for $2,000. That organ was used for the next 56 years. The records show that a communion set was purchased in 1910 for $46.30.

Voorhees Garth met his future wife through the church. As Greta Wezen, she joined with her parents in 1911. Recalling her youth in First church, Mrs. Garth remembered how much the young people enjoyed Friday night "socials" as well as the Christian Endeavor, started by the Rev. Mr. Garth and held on Sunday nights before evening church services.

Mrs. Raymond Hefner, a member continuously since 1905, especially enjoyed the mid-week prayer meeting during Mr. Garth's years here. "It was such a friendly, homey time, with people lingering to talk." Her other many pleasant memories of those days include such property improvements as the paving of the streets around the church corner and the planting of the large maple trees on the Third Avenue side, "given to the church by George Killian, Sr."

Our church was hostess to the North Carolina Synod in 1914. Later, in his

*For any too young to know the meaning of "pounding", it was actually a "pantry shower", when members surprised the "preacher" and his family with gifts of all kinds of food.

Gathered at the front of the manse built in 1908 are the Rev. J. G. Garth and family.

book on the history of Presbyterian Home Missions in the state, the Rev. Mr. Garth reported on at least one important happening at that gathering:

> "The movement was started to organize a new Synod to be known as Appalachia Synod, which should consist of the Presbyteries on the borders of Western North Carolina and East Tennessee, Eastern Kentucky, and Western West Virginia. This meant, of course, that the Synod of North Carolina must contribute to the Presbytery of Asheville, and parts of Concord and Kings Mountain. A warm discussion followed. . .but finally the Synod voted for the separation 104 to 17."

Another foreign missionary went out from the church during Mr. Garth's pastorate. She was Mrs. Louise Dixon Crane, sister of Miss Rosa Lee Dixon. Mrs. Crane went with her husband to Africa in 1912. Not many years later, another "daughter of the church", Miss Ruby Satterfield, became our church's fourth foreign missionary, when she began work in China.

World War One was the event that brought the resignation of Mr. Garth from the ministry of this church. He hoped to participate in Y. M. C. A. work overseas in the war that had seen thirty young men from this congregation enlist for service. However, a traffic accident in Charlotte during Mr. Garth's time at Camp Greene resulted in long hospitalization and prevented his going overseas. Later he served as editor of the "Presbyterian Standard", did religious writing, and served well his Presbytery and Synod.

THE REVEREND EDWARD MARSHALL CRAIG, D. D. (1919-1925)

The growth of First Church was accelerated during the next pastorate, that of the Rev. Edward Marshall Craig, D. D. He began his work May 25, 1919, at a salary of $2,100, later increased to $2,700. In his Historical Sketch, J. J. Willard wrote:

"During his pastorate 246 new members were received, and the church showed growth in all departments." By 1923, membership had reached 355 and Sunday School enrollment 326.

Among those who joined the church was Glenn O. Yount. (He retired in recent years from a long Presbyterian ministry and is now living in Huttonsville, West Virginia.) The Rev. Mr. Yount, Th.D-H.R., has described the congregation as:

> "a group of the finest Christian men and women I have ever known. . .I returned from World War One and united with the First Presbyterian Church. They found a place for me in the church and Sunday School, and their interest in me did not cease when I sold my home to return to school. The Elders (I was a deacon) of the First Church sent me money every year while I was in Seminary. . .I was always proud of my church. . .of wonderful and lovely people."

Others going into full-time church service from this congregation before 1925 included: The Rev. Bonnar Knox, Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Ramseur in Home Missions, and Miss Grace C. Henderson in Christian Education.

Looking back over his many years in our church choir, Connolly Gamble recalled that it was Dr. Craig who dismissed the choir for some time, with no explanation. The pastor announced one Sunday that, beginning the next Sunday, there would be no choir. Instead, there would be "congregational

singing, led by various choir members." As Mr. Gamble expressed it, "We were fired!" This lasted several months before the choir was reorganized.

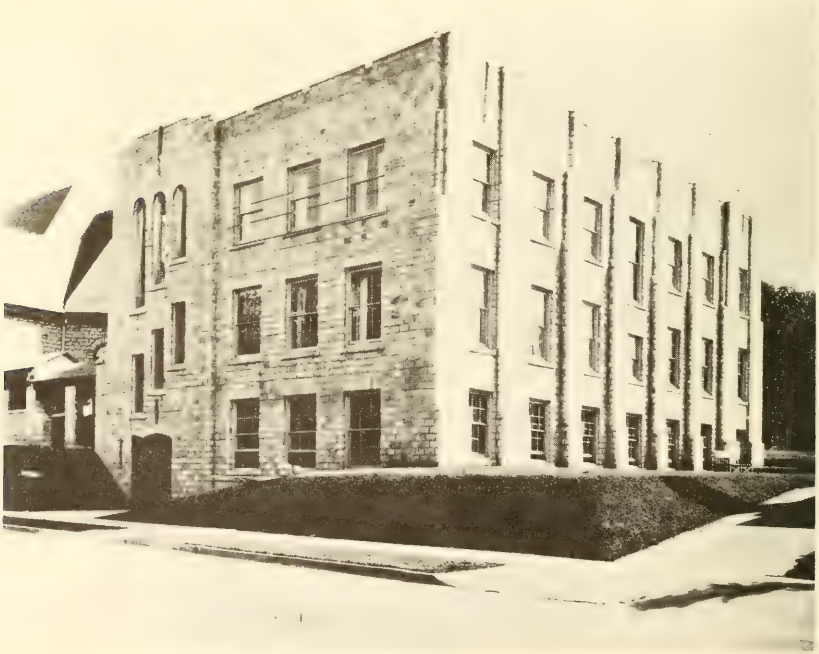
Dr. Craig resigned his pastorate December 1, 1925, to accept a secretaryship in Appalachia Synod.

For the next fourteen months, the church was without a regular pastor. A retired minister, the Rev. George F. Robertson, was engaged as supply pastor for this period.

CHAPTER III (1927-1952)

THE REVEREND JOHN RICHARDS HAY, D. D. (1927-1952)

The longest pastorate in the history of First Church was held by the Rev. John Richards Hay, D. D. He served for over 25 years, from February 1, 1927, to September 1, 1952.



Some indication of the steady progress of the church during those years is contained in the annual statistical reports to Presbytery. When Dr. Hay began his pastorate here in 1927, there were 372 members. Over 950 members were added to the rolls from 1927 to 1952; however, dismissals, primarily because of families moving elsewhere, dropped the net gain to 169, giving the church a membership of 541 in 1952. In 1927, the total church collections amounted to $10,230. Twenty-five years later the total was $36,710. During those years the amount given to "benevolences" was usually almost equal to "current expenses." Dr. Hay's salary rose during his pastorate from $3,300 to $4,600.

The first addition to the church's facilities in twenty years was a three-story Educational Building. This was erected in 1928 on Third Avenue, just west of the church, at a cost of around $28,000. Sunday School classes and other groups now had a place to meet other than in some part of the Sanctuary building. Twenty-one years later, in 1949, came the fulfillment of another of Dr. Hay's dreams--remodeling of the Sanctuary building for the first time since its construction in 1906. The old Sunday School section with its folding doors was transformed into a beautiful elevated area for the altar, choirs, organ, pulpit and lectern. The congregational seating, formerly in three divisions with four aisles and facing the old pulpit area in the southwest corner, was changed to two rows of new pews with center aisle facing west. The remodeling and refurnishing of the Sanctuary cost about $85,000. Many memorial gifts were presented by families in honor of former members.

Two years later, the Nowell property just south of the church was purchased for $23,500 for future expansion.

The church's program during Dr. Hay's years was expanded in many ways, including the establishment of a Church Council, Ministry of Music and full-time Director of Religious Education. The Men's Club was organized, and the work of the Boy Scouts received special attention. The rotation plan for ruling elders and deacons was adopted in 1947.

The first serious outpost work of the church was begun in 1943. Dr. Hay and a group of members, principally Hiram Balch and the Connolly Gamble family, began work in the Sweetwater community on October 29. Six months later the pastor and members of the J. O. Y. Sunday School Class began outpost work in the Sub-Station community, on April 30, 1944. By the summer of 1945, the work had grown to the point where First Church retained a full-time Director of Christian Education, Miss Kathleen Scott, who also directed the outpost work. Both Sweetwater and Belk Memorial Churches were organized in early 1946. In addition to his work at First Church, Dr. Hay preached and attended Sunday School at the outpost churches each Sunday afternoon or evening from 1944 until they called a pastor in June, 1947.

When Dr. Hay had been at First Church 11 years, E. P. Tuttle was elected treasurer--a position which he and/or his wife held until the illness of both brought their resignations 21 years later. One of the Tuttle daughters, Mrs. Robert McCampbell of our congregation, has recalled that for many of those years the Tuttles did not even have an adding machine. Often the Tuttle children helped by adding up columns of figures read to them by their father.

Four "sons" of the congregation went into the ministry during Mr. Hay's

years here. These were: the Hay's oldest son, Edward Craig; Connolly Gamble, Jr.; and two sons of Mrs. Louise Dixon Crane. Like most of the Crane children, Henry and Sidney spent much time in Hickory with their Dixon aunts during their school years. Henry followed in his parents' footsteps in becoming a missionary to the Congo; this service was cut short by his death. Dr. Sidney Crane served for some time as a minister but is now in other work in Reston, Virginia.

Dr. Connolly Gamble, Jr., Union Theological Seminary professor, had a very close relationship with the Hay family in growing up in this church where his grandmother, Mrs. Carrie Gamble, was an early member, and his parents have given so many years of service. Reflecting on what First Church has meant to him, Connolly wrote, in part:

> "Edward Hay and I were one day apart in age; and as we were good friends, I spent many hours with him and the Hays in the Manse, so that the family of the minister became a comfortable fellowship for me from early years. Dr. Hay's interest in youth stands out in my memories. I recall a camping trip to Myrtle Beach where he took some of us, sleeping on the sand beneath a cottage.
>
> "The dominant impression from my youth in First Church is the extraordinary interest that many adults took in the young people of that age–as I recall my father leading new songs in Vacation Bible School, and Brooks Todd's leadership of Troop 2 of the Boy Scouts, and Misses Fannie and Rosa Lee Dixon and Mrs. George Bailey's work with our Sunday School classes. First Church lent the third floor of the Educational Building to the first Boys' club of Hickory, which 'Pinkie' James organized about 1933, I think. This kind of solid investment that so many competent and mature people put into the cultivation of adolescents stands out as an enduring appreciation when I recall my early years in First Church."

Of the Hay's three sons, two are now in full-time church work and the third is a physician. The oldest, the Rev. Edward C. Hay, minister at First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Alabama, recently reminisced as follows about his years in Hickory:

> "I suppose that all of us have those places, people, and experiences to which we turn back again and again with a kind of spiritual nostalgia. The church in Hickory is the focal-point of my spiritual nostalgia, for so much of my religious consciousness and my body of convictions were shaped by, and within, that congregation. I was five years old when we moved into the manse in 1927; and it was before that congregation that I publicly professed my faith in Jesus Christ, it was with the blessing of that congregation that I became a candidate for the ministry, and it was from that congregation's membership roll I was dismissed to the Presbytery by which I was ordained to the ministry.
>
> "Though the last time I worshipped as a part of that congregation was over twenty years ago at the dedication of the remodeled Sanctuary, its influence is still a lively and potent force in my consciousness. I am grateful to the First Presbyterian Church of Hickory for what it has contributed to my faith and life, and for showing me something of what it means to be the Church of Jesus Christ."

In spite of having battled serious illness several times in recent years, the

youngest Hay son, John R. Hay, Jr., is assistant to the Minister of First Presbyterian Church in Kingsport, Tennessee. He has expressed his feelings about our Hickory church this way:

"It is not easy to describe what First Presbyterian in Hickory has meant to me. One reason, I suppose, is that it is difficult to separate church and home in my mind because they were so closely related through all those years. But that is how it should be, of course.

"Whatever the things are that point one to faith in Christ and help him grow toward maturity, they were all present in one way or another. I am profoundly grateful that God put me in that place. There was worship, instruction, fellowship, and an attitude of love and acceptance which enables a person to move toward finding a faith of his own on which to build his life. Looking back now, I can see more clearly how God used the persons and events of those years in preparing me for decisions which were to be made later on.

"But what First Church means to me is not all back there in the past. It is still very real. You can't imagine how much Elizabeth Ann, the boys, and I have felt your support during these years of illness. You have helped us know in a profound way the meaning of Christian community."

All three Hay sons were young men when Dr. Hay submitted his resignation in July, 1952, effective at the end of August. He later served as pastor of the Ahoskie Presbyterian Church.

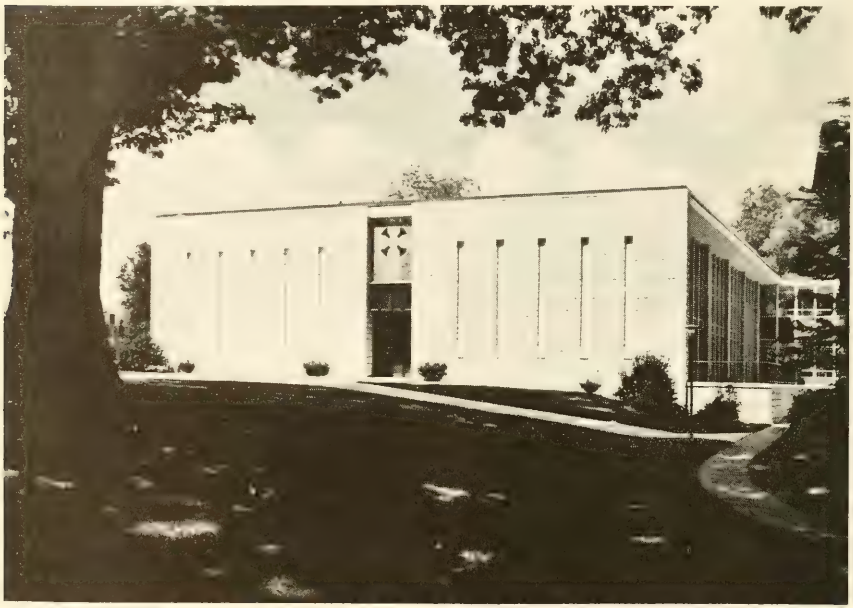
CHAPTER IV (1952-1973)

THE REVEREND FRED ROGERS STAIR, JR. (1952-1959)

After seven months without a pastor and with a regular supply only a small portion of that time, the congregation welcomed their new minister, the Rev. Fred Rogers Stair, Jr., on April 1, 1953.

Within two years Sunday School enrollment jumped sixty per cent and church membership increased to 644. The need for additional Sunday School space became especially acute. Several Hickory churches were moving away from the business district, but First Presbyterian chose to remain downtown, to provide continued and expanded services to "The Heart of Hickory."

So, a campaign was launched to raise funds for a new Education building for the children and youth, and to remodel Fellowship Hall and add a new kitchen in the older Education building. Property of the M. V. Yount estate, adjacent to the Nowell property acquired in 1951, was purchased to provide space for the new building and for additional parking. A service of Thanksgiving on Sunday, November 24, 1957, marked the opening of the completed building. The total cost of new construction and remodeling was approximately $225,000.



It was also in 1957 that the church purchased, for future use, the W. H. Ballew property just west of the manse lot. The cost was $18,750. Three years earlier a new church facility was begun, the church library. In 1960, this was to become the Elizabeth Williams Hollar Memorial Library, with new decoration, equipment, and additional books.

A church administrative office was set up with a full-time secretary, and a church hostess was added. Other innovations included the Ushers Guild, a Contract group of men interested in evangelism, and a week-day kindergarten for five-year-olds.

With stress on tithing and increased giving to benevolent causes, the church began furnishing half the support of the Rev. and Mrs. Lamar Williamson, missionaries to the Belgian Congo, Africa.

The field of Christian Education received special emphasis during Mr. Stair's years at First Church. Leadership training and rotation were begun for Sunday School teachers and workers. In 1958 this church was selected by the Presbyterian U. S. Board of Christian Education to be one of five churches, out of more than 4,000, for research and experimentation with the new "Covenant Life" church school curriculum being written for the whole denomination. Vocational guidance was begun for senior high school students

in the congregation. In 1957 the church co-sponsored, with First Methodist Church, the first of a series of Family Life conferences.

Conscious of its location in "The Heart of Hickory", the church became the springboard for many community-service programs later taken over by other groups. These included the Empty Stocking Fund, Senior Citizens Club, Family Guidance, study of inadequate housing for financially-deprived citizens, and special education for handicapped children.

In the summer of 1958 the congregation had a unique experience when the Stairs exchanged pulpits and manses with the Rev. and Mrs. J. A. Ross McKenzie of Edinburgh, Scotland.

Among the congregation's youth deciding on church vocations during Mr. Stair's years was Betty Burgess, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Burgess and granddaughter of early members of this church, Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Doll. Now Mrs. Sidney Frazer of Asheville and very active in the First Presbyterian Church there, she considers growing up in Hickory's First Presbyterian church the "most influential thing" in her life. "I was active in all phases of Sunday School and Youth Work and enjoyed it very much. I found so much meaning in it that I felt a call to be a Director of Christian Education."

After college, she worked as D. C. E. at Lincolnton's First Presbyterian Church. Returning to Hickory to live after her marriage, she did a variety of work in this church. At the Asheville church, she has been an Interim D. C. E. and is currently assistant Superintendent of the Sunday School, a member of the Christian Education committee, Personal Faith and Family Life chairman for the Women of the Church, and a member of the Key 73 committee.

The influence of Mr. Stair holds an important place in the Rev. William (Bill) Bason's memory of the time he spent in First Church as a young man. After some time in church work, Mr. Bason is now engaged in the field of family counseling at a New York hospital. Responding to a request for comments on his experiences in our church, he wrote, in part:

> "As a newcomer, I met some of my best friends there. In thinking back over those years, I know Fred Stair helped me more than anyone else in deciding to go back to college and on to the Seminary. Also, I remember enjoying a Young Adult class that met at the Manse on Sunday mornings. Martha (Mrs. Stair) had a pot of hot coffee and fresh doughnuts for us, and the discussion was always lively. More than anything else, it kept me in town at least 'til noon on Sundays."

Miss Mary Ruth Marshall, daughter of Mrs. Agnes Marshall and niece of Misses Minnie and Mildred Bingham of our church, is now in Christian Education work in Victoria, Australia. Although most of her growing-up years were not in First Church, Hickory, she did attend during vacations and at other times. Her comments about her experiences here include these:

> "There are a number of people at First Presbyterian Church, Hickory, who have been instrumental in the directions my life as a Christian educator has followed. The first was my aunt Minnie and her Beginner's Sunday School Class. Helping there during vacations gave me my earliest understandings of what Christian education was all about, and the educational work of the church seemed significant and important. . .Then there was Milton Bibee, who took a strong personal interest in my plans and was largely responsible for my first Christian education job. And Fred Stair, a warm supportive friend on a number of

occasions when I had important decisions to make. Two people, my 8th grade teacher, Mrs. Edwards (Virginia Garth Edwards) and my grandfather Bingham, both of whom said to me, 'You can do anything you want to do.' But most of all, I had the example of my mother, the most dedicated teacher and the finest Christian I know."

The ministry of Mr. Stair at this church ended August 23, 1959. He and his family went to Atlanta, Georgia, where he had accepted a call to Central Presbyterian Church. From his pastorate there, he was later called to become president of Union Theological Seminary, in Richmond, Virginia, his present position.

Dr. George Staples, Davidson College chaplain, served our church in a supply capacity while another pastor was being sought to succeed the Rev. Mr. Stair.

THE REVEREND WILLIAM W. WILLIAMSON, D. D. (1960-1964)

It was March, 1960, when the Rev. William W. Williamson, D. D. became the next minister of this church. Five months later he was joined by the Rev. Klell Napps, our first Minister of Education, who remained here several years.

Work continued on programs already underway, including the Covenant Life Curriculum study and experimentation, and Family Life Conferences held in cooperation with several other local churches. Among the innovations during Dr. Williamson's pastorate were: organization of Westminister Fellowship for college-age students, including Presbyterians at Lenoir Rhyne College; and the church's "Maundy Thursday" pre-Easter Communion Service in Fellowship Hall. One year after Dr. Williamson began his work here, the church, for the first time in some years, gave as much to benevolences as to current expenses. This continued for several years.

For some time efforts had been underway to secure a new manse. The 50-year-old manse, although updated from time to time, was by now outmoded and in need of much repair. In late 1961 a house nearing completion at 825 Second Street Northwest was purchased for $42,500. When the Williamsons moved there in February, 1962, they became the first "manse" family to live more than a few steps from our Sanctuary since 1908.

The latest purchase of property to expand the church's holdings in its downtown location was also made while Dr. Williamson was pastor. This was the Woman's Club lot, adjoining the church's western property line on Third Avenue Northwest. The price was $20,000.

For two months, beginning in mid-April, 1963, Dr. and Mrs. Williamson were in Scotland where he studied. Dr. Daniel Rhodes of Davidson College supplied the pulpit during this period. In the early summer of that same year, Dr. Williamson served as co-chairman of the Catawba Valley Evangelistic Crusade held in the Lenoir Rhyne stadium by Dr. Leighton Ford, associate of Billy Graham. Dr. Graham himself participated in one service.

First Presbyterian became the "mother" of a third Hickory-area Presbyterian Church when Northminster Church was organized on February 2, 1964. Two years earlier our members in the northern section of Hickory had been surveyed, with a view to organizing another church to be constructed on a site purchased several years earlier by Concord Presbytery.

Of Northminster's 64 charter members, 61 transferred from First Church to give the new church a firm beginning and leadership. This gave our church its first decline in membership, which had steadily increased to nearly 800 by the end of 1963.

The Williamson's older son, William W. (Bill), Jr., now associate minister of Westover Hills Presbyterian Church in Little Rock, Arkansas, made his decision to become a minister while a member of our church:

> "Many factors were involved in that decision, but I am convinced that one important influence was the church to which I then belonged, one which contributed much in showing me what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. .
>
> "One thing that impressed me was the seriousness and respect I was accorded as a young person. I felt that I was truly a part of the church and allowed to have a part in determining the direction the church would go. As I have come now to see youth work from the perspective of an adult, I am convinced that this is one of the most important ideas that a church can give to a young person: a feeling of importance. The Hickory Church gave me that sort of feeling.
>
> "But more than that, there was the spirit of the people themselves in Hickory. Time and time again I was impressed with the sense of dedication which the church members showed. It was truly a source of inspiration to me."

The other Williamson son, Charles (Chuck), is now associate minister of First Presbyterian Church in Goldsboro. After commenting on the fact that he still feels close to Hickory, the church, and his friends here, he wrote:

> "I would say that there is one area particularly in which the Hickory Church influenced me and pushed me along toward the ministry. During my junior and senior years in high school, I served on the Concord Presbytery Youth Council. Although I didn't realize it at the time, the relationships established while working with those other young people had a lasting influence on me. . .I learned something about the Presbyterian system of government that I could never have learned otherwise. But more important, I learned something about my desire to work with people, and something about my style of working with others. These learnings came as a result of the support and interest of First Church and Concord Presbytery."

Another "teen-ager" in the congregation during Dr. Williamson's pastorate who has since gone into church work was Nancy Lackey, now Mrs. Barry Farmer of Danville, Virginia. She majored in church music at St. Andrew's College and is a church organist. Thinking back on her years in our church, Nancy, daughter of Mrs. Richard Lackey, has written:

> "First Presbyterian Church played a vital part in my life as I was growing up–especially during my teen years. The two most important church activities were singing in the chancel choir and attending Youth Fellowship on Sunday nights. Robert Ellis directed the chancel choir while I was a member, and I received excellent vocal and musical training under his leadership. This was the only musical training I received before going to college, other than regular piano lessons. I feel that my Christian faith was strengthened and strong foundations for my later Christian development were laid by participating in the programs and discussions presented through the Youth Fellowship program.

"When I began taking organ lessons in college, the church very graciously allowed me to practice when I came home for vacations. This meant a great deal to me because I was able to keep up my applied music assignments. . .I am thankful that I was able to be an active part of this church for so many years."

Dr. Williamson, after being our pastor for a little over four years, resigned in May, 1964, effective in June, to accept a call to Peachtree Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, Georgia.

THE REVEREND J. WHITNER KENNEDY (1964-)

Our present pastor, the Rev. J. Whitner Kennedy, began his work of leadership and inspiration here in September, 1964. The past eight-and-one-half years have witnessed steady growth of membership, expansion of the church staff to meet our needs, updating of our facilities, and increasing activities and services within and beyond our church.

At the end of 1964, our net membership was listed as 718. By the end of 1972 it had reached 867.

Steady growth has required more church staff. Soon after Mr. Kennedy began his ministry here, the church started, and has continued, having a Union Theological Seminary student spend a full-year here, working in many phases of the church's life. Earlier, seminary students came only for the summer months.

Another staff addition is an assistant minister. Having a student minister and a director of Christian Education were steps leading to a vote by the Session in October, 1970, to secure an assistant minister. The Rev. Day Carper, former missionary to the Congo, was called in January, 1972, and moved here with his family in June. To provide housing for the assistant minister, the congregation acquired a third manse last spring. A residence, located at 559 Seventh Street Northwest, was purchased for $40,000.

A bookkeeper-secretary was also added to the church staff in the past year to handle detailed work of the church's financial matters. Although the need for clerical help for the treasurer was noted much earlier, the position was not filled until after Hudson Meacham moved away from Hickory. His 15 years of service as treasurer, bookkeeper, deacon, elder, church school teacher, Scout Master, and member of important committees was commemorated by a resolution of appreciation prepared by the Session. This was read to Mr. Meacham during a Sunday church service.

Updating of the church's facilities, beginning in 1965, has added convenience along with a great deal of beauty and comfort. Most improvements were covered by special pledges.

In 1965 the second floor of the older educational building was upgraded at a cost of $8,500. In 1966 and 1967, the main floor, offices, and some classrooms in that building were air conditioned, and the newer educational building and Sanctuary were completely air conditioned. Also in 1967 a new organ was installed to replace the one that had served for nearly 60 years; and the Sanctuary received new lighting, redecoration, and improvements to the balcony. The cost of organ and Sanctuary work totaled $53,000.

In 1967, the upstairs of the oldest manse was refurbished and furnished to

provide living quarters for the student pastor. The young people themselves redecorated the downstairs area for their meetings and recreation and renamed the house "The Manster".

In 1970 came the remodeling and beautification of the Fellowship Hall, including work on the kitchen and addition of first-floor rest rooms. The cost was $31,500. The most recent improvement to church property is the transformation of the former Woman's Club lot into a lighted parking and recreation facility. Last November the church leased this property to First National Bank. The Bank agreed to make all improvements, rent the parking spaces to their employees five days a week, and give the church exclusive use of the lot in the evenings and on weekends. The church will realize some revenue each year, and the five-year-lease may be terminated or extended, depending on the needs of the church.

The church's program, activities, and services have been expanded in many directions during Mr. Kennedy's ministry.

One innovation in the Sunday church service has been the "Service of Friendship," instituted in 1969. To assure a better welcome to visitors and wider friendship among the congregation, a "Friendship Booklet" is signed by all on each pew while the minister encourages "speaking to those around you after the service." All are also welcomed at the church doors each Sunday morning by elders, occasionally assisted by young people.

A new Church School class, the "Swingers," was formed several years ago to provide fellowship among the young adults of the congregation, including prospective members. This class is open only to couples whose combined ages do not exceed 70. Monthly social gatherings are held, and the "Swingers" have service projects. For example, their concern to provide some help for young mothers of the community led to the beginning of our church's twice-weekly Day Nurseries for infants to three years, and to the spreading of this service to three other churches in order to provide the current five-mornings-a-week nurseries.

Another new service at the church has been the "Mother's Day Out" extension classes, open to the community and offering subjects ranging from Bible study to bridge to cake-decorating. These classes are held in spring and fall in cooperation with the Catawba Valley Technical Institute; they have been coordinated by the Christian Community Action committee of the Women of the Church. There are nurseries for children of mothers attending.

Another type of service is provided by the church's Memorial Education Scholarship Fund, begun soon after Mr. Kennedy came. This fund was started primarily from concern following the death of a dedicated elder and Sunday School worker, Milton Bibee. Memorial gifts supply funds to give needed financial help with higher education.

In the years since their father's death, both Ellen and Jane Bibee have graduated from the Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia, and have served as Directors of Christian Education. For some years their mother, Mrs. Madeliene Bibee, has headed our weekday church kindergarten, and has assisted in the church office. Ellen Bibee, after doing D. C. E. work in Japan, is now in Australia, temporarily working for a university. Replying to a request for some "memories" of growing up in our church, she wrote:

"My home church was the center of our family life. There was a meaningful

relationship between church and home. I was always aware of the Faith, and that God was Lord of All."

Jane Bibee, currently D. C. E. at Christ Congregational Church, Silver Spring, Maryland, feels that growing up in our church meant "growing up in an atmosphere of love and support."

"So many experiences then influenced my total life style. A child usually learns what he discovers for himself. I discovered the love of Christ through love shown to me, and now I seek to pass it on. When I think of all the family night suppers, Sunday School teachers, ministers, camps, junior and senior high fellowship activities, it makes me realize how important our church life has been. I am constantly grateful for the continued love and concern we have for each other. This has created an atmosphere that encourages us to reach our full potentialities as persons. When I think in terms of who or what influenced my life the most, I think of the two members of First Presbyterian whom I love the most - my own parents."

In counting our church's "sons and daughters" going into full-time church work, we can also include the student minister who served here in 1971-72. Huw Christopher, a native of Wales, joined this church from the Welch Baptist Church in October, 1971. In the spring of 1972, he was endorsed as a candidate for the Presbyterian ministry by the Session; and on May 1, 1972, he was accepted by Concord Presbytery as a candidate for the ministry. Two months later he was ordained, and was installed as pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Washington, North Carolina, where he now serves.

Our church's full program for all ages results in extensive use of the buildings and surrounding property. Not only on Sunday but also all through the week, groups gather for meetings--the many choirs, the various Boy and Girl Scout troops, those interested in special Bible study, the Session, the Diaconate, the Women of the Church Board and membership, youth groups, the kindergarten, the nurseries, others.

Furthermore, the church's convenient location in "The Heart of Hickory" makes it a popular meeting place for other groups. The Session and Board of Deacons have continually desired to share the facilities with any reputable group in Hickory. Those gathering at the church for regular or special get-togethers include: A. A., Alateens, Tops Clubs, Jaycettes, and Lenoir Rhyne College students.

For the past several summers, a Day Camp for culturally-deprived children has been operated at the church by the Catawba County Social Services department. The church has provided not only the facilities but also some funds to help hire student workers.

For some years this church has maintained a "Fellowship Fund" used for helping needy persons in the congregation and community, including transients. Special contributions to this fund are received at intervals during morning church services.

In January, 1972, a Day Care Center for adults was begun on our Manster's first floor under the direction of the Catawba County Family Mental Health Services. The purpose is to provide a therapeutic environment for adults from the community for a variety of reasons. The Center offers personal support, group therapy, crafts, and activities. It is open five days a

week from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Our church provides the building, all utilities, financial help, and volunteer workers.

First Presbyterian's "outreach" program, which gained so much momentum in the 1950's, has continued during Mr. Kennedy's pastorate with inter-church cooperation.

He was chairman of the Hickory Ministerial Association's committee named to investigate employing a full-time chaplain at Catawba Memorial Hospital. Our church's support enabled the chaplaincy program to operate for a full-year without asking any help from other churches; and we have continued to pledge regularly to this service.

This church took a large responsibility in the formation of the Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministry, and continues its support and work for that organization. Mr. Kennedy was the first president and has remained on the Board of Ministry, having been a member of the Ministerial Association committee that first pushed for the Cooperative Ministry. In its initial stages, the offices were at our church, and Mrs. Carter Sinclair of our congregation was one of two part-time workers.

Prior to any public housing in Hickory, First Presbyterian sought to provide some low-income housing. When Hickory's public housing was achieved, this church, working through the Cooperative Ministry, gave money for new mattresses and other furniture items for those moving into apartments. Mrs. Willard Smart of this church, with cooperation from other groups, has been conducting a program of recreation and fellowship for the "Sunny Valley" senior citizens area of the public housing.

Over the past several years, our Senior High young people have made a monthly visitation to Western Carolina Center at Morganton. This activity has now developed into a "Big Brother-Big Sister" program where willing members of the Senior High Fellowship are matched, one to one, with children selected from the education units at the Center.

The women of our church have been so involved in outreach activities that a separate chapter of this history has been devoted to the contributions they have made in their century of service.

Another interesting dimension in our church's growth is the progress we have made in sharing with our denomination's causes and institutions what God has so graciously given to us over the years.

Early papers of our church include one that appealed to others in the Presbytery to help the struggling young Hickory church pay for its first building. In 1877 aid came in the form of $100 in pledges. In his 1949 "Historical Sketch", Mr. Willard declared that this $100 investment had brought great returns to the Presbyterian church at large. He reported that, to that date, First Church had contributed some $191,000 to outside causes.

Since that time, our church's gifts to benevolent causes, including church institutions, have so greatly increased that the total gifts to benevolences were $59,030 in 1972 alone. In the past five years this church has contributed $30,000 to Union Theological Seminary's advance program and $30,000 to St. Andrew's College. The latter was in addition to $45,000 given to St. Andrews when the new college was begun. These are typical of the support our church has provided through the years.

* *

This church enters its second century with a very full program of activities, worship, and/or service for all ages.

The Church school carries on a full program requiring a staff of 53 teachers and leaders. A nursery is operated during Church School and Church Service. There are three Youth Fellowship groups, with members from the seventh through twelfth grades. In addition, children and youth are busy with choirs and Girl and Boy Scout troops. Other important groups in the church include the Chancel Choir and the Ushers Guild. Membership on the Diaconate and Session is now 21 in each group; this includes one woman deacon and four women elders.

Now, as all through our history, members of this church are also serving in positions of responsibility in Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly, as well as on the boards of our denomination's various institutions.

As of February 1, 1973, First Church's membership roll included eight men and women who had been continuously affiliated for more than 60 years: Miss Rosa Lee Dixon, Connolly Gamble, Sr., Mrs. Raymond Hefner, William W. McComb, Sr., Miss Millie Kate McComb, Mr. and Mrs. C. Voorhees Garth, and Donald S. Menzies.

As of the same date, these had held membership continuously for more than 50 years: R. Harry McComb, Mrs. P. W. Troutman, David M. McComb, Sr., Mrs. S. C. Nowell, Mrs. Harry Burgess, Mrs. Zeb Brown, George Killian, Jr., Miss Mildred Bingham, Miss Minnie Bingham, Mrs. M. P. Lipe, Sr., Mrs. J. T. Lynn, Mrs. R. T. Hambrick, Sr., Hiram S. Balch, Mrs. Louise Lawrence, Mrs. J. J. Hefner, Mrs. Donald Shuford, Karl W. Broome, Mrs. Shuford Abernethy, Mrs. Connolly Gamble, Sr., Philip Menzies, Miss Louise Abernethy, Mrs. Richard Lackey, and Mrs. Henry Reichard.

Dr. Ramsay's 50th anniversary History carried this comment which still applies 50 years later:

> "pastors, differing in their talents, all filled their places faithfully and were blessed of God in their labors for the upbuilding of His Kingdom in our midst. . .This history would not be complete without mention of the loyalty and devotion of the members of this church, men and women, whose self-sacrificing efforts have made possible the splendid progress of the church, and whose prayers and consecrated lives are our greatest heritage."

So many have given so many years of dedicated service to this church that it is impossible to make special mention of all deserving such. Some 150 different men have been ordained as Elders, and approximately the same number have served on the Diaconate in the past 100 years.

There have been five women elders, beginning with the election of Mrs. Edward Craig in 1965. Our first woman deacon, Mrs. Charles Dixon, was elected in 1972. In 1966 Hiram Balch was honored for having been a ruling elder for 50 years. He was ordained in 1916 at a Presbyterian church in Tennessee, and was elected an elder in our church in 1924, four years after joining.

Many others have served long and faithfully as trustees, treasurers, choir members, choir directors, organists, Church School teachers and leaders, Scout leaders, Youth Fellowship advisers, and in many other positions requiring dedication and work. Younger members and newer members continue to move into positions of leadership and responsibility.

In our Centennial year, our total property--sanctuary, two educational buildings, surrounding property, three manses--is valued at $825,000.

The three other Hickory-area Presbyterian churches spawned by First Presbyterian are also thriving. None now receives any financial help from First Church. Belk Memorial Church, with the Rev. George Hunter as pastor, reported 143 active members at the end of 1972. Mr. Hunter pinpointed the church's major effort at present as being "toward the youth of the community." Sweetwater Church now has 105 active members and is proud of being self-supporting. The Rev. Bobby Combs is pastor. One major program is the operation of a Day Care Center, with 40 children enrolled. At Northminster Church, 223 members were reported at the end of 1972. The Rev. John Wilkerson, pastor, said the church is beginning to stress a program of meeting family needs, with the creation and planned expansion of a Child Development Center at the church.

The memberships of these three churches combined with our church's 867 members make a total of 1,338 Presbyterians on the rolls of the four Greater Hickory churches as of January 1, 1973.

This is where we are as we end our first century and stand on the threshold of our second century. The challenge of the accomplishments of the past gives us impetus to press forward with increased zeal as we and those who follow us "write" with our lives, our service, and our substance a continuing history of progress for the First Presbyterian Church of Hickory, North Carolina.

CHAPTER V

WOMEN'S WORK IN THIS CHURCH

If ten cents a month sounds like insignificant giving, and if buying a spittoon for the church seems startling, then project yourself back in time to our church's early days when the women began to fill important needs with their time, talents, and money. Let's look at the integral part the women of this church have taken through the years in the church's program.

About 1887, when First Presbyterian was just 14 years old, the "Earnest Workers" group was organized. These women were truly "earnest workers", as they labored to provide funds for many church needs. Four years later,

on September 21, 1891, the Women's Missionary Society was begun for the purpose of studying and supporting Home and Foreign missions. A review of early "minutes" reveals that both groups had essentially the same membership.

Women active in the Missionary Society and/or Earnest Workers included these gathered on the lawn of the H. E. McComb residence. From left to right they were: Miss Essie Seagle, Miss Amelia McComb, Mrs. H. M. Doll, Mrs. Bettie C. Holden, Mrs. Louise K. Auld, and Miss Lois Seagle, who was the church organist for some years.

The Earnest Workers usually met weekly. As they quilted or sewed, they planned money-making projects and how to spend their hard-earned funds. The Missionary Society met monthly, studying home missions one month and foreign missions the next. Each group set dues at ten cents per member per month. However, the organizational minutes of the Society state: "in case any should not be able to give so much, that such one may give as God prospers." In contrast, the Earnest workers did not hesitate to remind members of past-due obligations and even made personal visits to collect delinquent fees.

The Earnest Workers' meetings must have been very enjoyable gatherings, as they, like the Missionary Society, met alphabetically at members' homes or at the Manse. Occasionally their minutes refer to their organization as "The Jolly Workers." On December 6, 1892, Mrs. Carrie Gamble, secretary, (mother of Connolly Gamble) recorded: "While the discussion was at white heat (about an upcoming event), the president quieted us and in such a way that none took offense.

Money-raising projects of the Earnest Workers during the 1890's included: making and selling aprons for as little as 20 cents each; sponsoring a "concert" in the town Opera House, with the result that $18.15 was cleared from the $43.65 taken in; holding an ice cream party (netted $32.70) and several oyster supper "sociables" (netting $15.00 and $17.50); making and selling quilts (at $2.00 each). On February 20, 1894, the secretary recorded: "Mrs. Dixon (mother of Miss Rosa Lee) had a plan to suggest to the Society, that each member plant ten cents worth of potatoes, and in the fall, put all together, sell, and give money to Society. All thought it a good idea." A check of the books shows that the potato sale brought in several dollars.

At the January 30, 1894 meeting, "Mrs. Clark told of gingham we could get at Shuford and Setzer's Store at small figures. The Secretary was notified to see about the same." At the next meeting, the secretary reported her investigation, and recorded: "The Society voted to purchase, and Mrs. Dixon and Mrs. Gamble went down the street and got it. The gingham was cut into aprons and sewed." The "low price" of the gingham was not recorded, but among receipts found in the old "minute book" was one certifying payment of 41 cents to Bowles and Doll Company for six yards of calico and two spools of thread. During the "financial panic" of 1894, the women also felt the pinch. Mrs. Gamble wrote in April: "Mrs. Hamilton's dress finished. She was much pleased at the making, and the Society better pleased at receiving one dollar, as our dollars are coming in very slow and the year passing away fast."

The many projects for which the Earnest Workers spent their money, in addition to saving toward and largely paying for the first manse, included these in 1893: "pitcher, glass, and spittoon" for the church, 55 cents; "cow stable" for the preacher's cow, $14.00; repairs to the church; helping to pay Dr. Ramsay's salary; and sending "a box to the orphans."

In contrast to the Earnest Workers, the Missionary Society had serious programs and no projects. Programs were given alternately on Home missions and Foreign missions by various members and the pastor. The minutes show that each time the "fees" had accumulated to about $11.00, the money was sent to Concord Presbytery for equal division between the two types of missions.

The Missionary Society endeavored to get other church members to subscribe to a publication entitled, "The Missionary". Articles from this paper were used at their meetings. Once the secretary recorded about these articles: they "were to the edification of all present in that they tended to stirring up more of the missionary spirit."

These two early women's groups in our church--Missionary Society and Earnest Workers--laid the foundation for the study, service, gifts, and outreach that were to form the program for the future "Ladies Auxiliary", which, in 1949, became the "Women of the Church."

A sketch prepared by Miss Amelia McComb, then Ladies Auxiliary historian, for our church's 50th Anniversary History details some of the progress of our women's organization:

> "This society was one of the first in Concord Presbytery to ask that a Union (of all Auxiliaries in the Presbytery) be formed. Presbytery granted the request, and the Hickory society had a delegate present at the organization of the Union May

8, 1906. The Union's fourth meeting was held in the Hickory church April 5-7, 1910. In 1918, the name was changed from Union to Presbyterial.

"September, 1916, the Ladies Auxiliary was divided into circles. At that time there were 42 names on the roll. At the present (March, 1923), there are 75 names enrolled. There are five circles, a Young Woman's circle having been added last year."

Mrs. W. B. Ramsay, who then belonged to our church, was Presbyterial president from 1910 to 1914 and Synodical president from 1915 to 1920. Mrs. E. C. Yoder was Presbyterial president from 1925 to 1928, and Mrs. LeRoy Campbell was Presbyterial president from 1953 to 1955.

Through the years the work of our women has expanded in many directions. Contributions and services to our own church have included these: $2,000 toward the cost of the first education building; $100 for repairs to the front of the church; $100 annually for church kitchen; funds and work for overhauling church kitchen in 1938-40; providing some furnishings for Fellowship Hall; redecorating the church parlor (now choir rehearsal room) in 1949; serving suppers to the men, youth, family nights, other church groups; remembering the "shut-ins"; placing flowers in the Sanctuary on Sundays; starting the nurseries held during church services; aiding fellowship by sponsoring bridge-luncheons, workshops, etc.

Other church-related projects have included: financial help for a prospective home missionary and for a local youth worker; financial aid, many items, and services to Sweetwater and Belk memorial churches; clothing, supplies, and money to Church World Service, White Cross, and to our various mission fields; financial aid and services to the former local Presbyterian church in Ridgeview section, St. James; aid to Barium Springs children.

Community and area projects have also been far reaching, such as: contributions to school milk funds and clothing closets; aid to Ridgeview library; Red Cross Work during both World Wars; aid to local polio hospital in 1946; Broughton Hospital visitation and parties; providing funds for Western Carolina School children to attend Camp Grier; aid to Catawba County Juvenile Receiving Home; aid to Crossnore school; helping to prepare the oldest manse's first floor for the new Adult Day Care Center, and continuing to provide some help for the Center, operated by the Catawba County Mental Health Center.

For many years the W. O. C. was responsible for the whole Joy Gift service at Christmas. The church's Missions Season has always given great responsibility to the women. Through the years our women have given thousands of dollars to their annual Birthday Offering. Now in its 50th year, the Birthday Offering in our whole denomination has totalled more than $7.6 million, used to launch some 60 institutions, programs, and buildings in areas of need in the United States and many foreign countries where our church has missions. Mrs. LeRoy Campbell and Mrs. Carl Wolfe of this church have been among the groups of women from our denomination visiting the various mission fields and Birthday objectives from time to time.

This year our women are divided into 13 Circles, and there are 23 members on the Executive Board, headed by Mrs. Dan Espey as president.

The budget is set at $2,769.24, the greater part of which is for benevolences. In addition, our women give many hundreds of additional dollars annually for specific Circle projects. As our current minister has expressed it: "Our women undergird the total program of the church."

Past-presidents, starting with the W. O. C's first annual history in 1927-28, have been:

Mrs. A. C. Kelly, Mrs. Ralph Abernethy, Mrs. George Killian, Mrs. Paul Bumgarger, Sr., Mrs. George Hall, Sr., Mrs. W. H. Vander Linden, Sr., Mrs. A. C. Henderson, Sr., Mrs. R. T. Hambrick, Sr., Mrs. C. V. Garth, Mrs. C. C. Gamble, Sr., Mrs. Louis Whitener, Mrs. LeRoy Campbell, Mrs. Carl Wolfe, Mrs. F. G. Harper, Jr., Mrs. C. A. Poole, Mrs. Edward Craig, Mrs. David Bissette, Mrs. John Grier, Mrs. Edmond Smith, Jr., Mrs. Thomas Fitz, Mrs. James Peed, Mrs. W. N. Cowan, Mrs. T. W. Jameson.

No report of organizations of First Presbyterian women would be complete without a brief mention of the Ola Warner Class, which meets Sunday mornings for Bible study and once monthly with different members for programs and rolling of bandages for Korean hospitals. This class was originally the Philathea Class, whose earliest minutes are dated October, 1917. The enrollment was then 34, including Miss Millie Kate McComb who has belonged continuously for the past 55 years. Mrs. W. B. Ramsay was the first teacher. For many years the class was taught by George W. Hall. In 1935 it was the "Young Woman's Class" with Mrs. J. J. Willard as teacher and Miss Ola Warner as president. In May, 1936, one month after the sudden death of the president, the class was renamed "Ola Warner" Class.

EPILOGUE

BY THE REVEREND J. WHITNER KENNEDY

That is how it has been in our past--and how it is now, as we come to our 100th anniversary. But where do we go from here?

The Session is deeply concerned that we begin our new century with purpose and direction similar to that evidenced in the beginning of the first century of our Church's life, and that the whole congregation should be involved in the planning process. Consequently forty persons are being trained to lead small groups in the sharing of ideas and concerns about the mission of our Church in the first three to five years of our second century. Twenty small groups, in which every communicant member will be invited to share, will meet twice between March 18, our Anniversary, and April 22, which is Easter, 1973. The first small group sessions will be to share any and all ideas and concerns about the direction in which our Church should move. The second sessions will look at all the ideas and suggestions which come from all 20 small group meetings, and will express feelings of priorities in terms of the next three to five years. In this way it is hoped that all of the congregation will feel directly involved in determining the program of the Church during the first three to five years of our second century.

The possibilities before our Church for witness and service in our second century are limited only by the extent to which we commit ourselves to the work of Christ. Almost every conceivable talent and ability is present in an amazing way in the current membership of our Church. God has blessed us in amazing ways. It behooves us, as we look toward our second century to remember the words of our Lord: "Every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required."

(Luke 12:48)

APPENDIX

IMPORTANT DATES IN THE HISTORY OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HICKORY, N. C.

1873 (March 18)	– Organized as "Gibb's Mission", with Rev. G. M. Gibbs as pastor.
1878	– Name changed to "Hickory", and first church building completed.
1879-1884	– Rev. G. A. Thurston, pastor.
1885-1891	– Rev. C. A. Munroe, pastor.
1891-1900	– Rev. J. A. Ramsay, D. D., pastor.
1891	– Woman's Missionary Society organized.
	– First manse purchased.
1900-1903	– Rev. W. T. Matthews, pastor.
	Lot purchased for erection of new church.
1904-1907	– Rev. C. W. Trawick, pastor.
1906	– Present sanctuary building completed.
1908-1918	– Rev. J. G. Garth, pastor
	First manse sold, second manse erected next to church.
1910	– First pipe organ installed.
1919-1925	– Rev. Edward M. Craig, D. D., pastor.
1925-1952	– Rev. John R. Hay, D. D., pastor.
1928	– First educational building erected.
1945	– First Director of Christian Education came.
1946	– Sweetwater and Belk Memorial Churches organized.
1947	– Rotation plan adopted for Ruling Elders and Deacons.
1949	– Sanctuary completely remodeled.
1951	– Nowell property south of church purchased.
1952-1959	– Rev. Fred R. Stair, Jr., pastor.
1954	– Church library begun.
1955	– M. V. Yount property, adjacent to Nowell lots, purchased.
	Church began providing half the support of a missionary couple.
1957	– Ballew property west of church purchased.
	Second educational building erected, Fellowship Hall remodeled with kitchen wing added.
1958	– Church became one of 5 selected from 4,000 for study of and experimentation with proposed Covenant Life Curriculum, continuing this for three years.
1960-1964	– Rev. W. W. Williamson, D. D., pastor
1960	– Library dedicated as memorial to Elizabeth Williams Hollar.
1962	– New manse purchased at 825 Second Street, Northwest.
1964	– Woman's Club property, west of Ballew lot, purchased.
	Northminster Church organized, with 61 of the charter members coming from congregation of First Church.
1964-	– Rev. J. Whitner Kennedy, pastor.
1965	– Memorial Educational Fund started.
	First woman elder elected.
1966-1967	– Sanctuary building, new educational building, portions of first educational building air-conditioned.

New organ installed, sanctuary improved.

1967 – Upstairs of oldest manse refurbished for first full-year student intern minister; downstairs became Youth Center.

1970 – Fellowship Hall remodeled.

1972 – Assistant Minister, Rev. Day Carper, secured.

Manse for assistant minister purchased at 559 Seventh Street, Northwest

First woman deacon elected.

Lease agreement signed with First National Bank to convert former Woman's Club lot into lighted parking and recreation facility.

SOME WHO HAVE SERVED DURING OUR FIRST CENTURY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

R. S. Johnston, J. G. Hall, Dr. W. B. Ramsay, John E. Haithcock, George W. Hall, E. B. Cline, K. C. Menzies, Hugh P. Williams, P. W. Bumbarger, Sr., D. S. Menzies, C. V. Garth, A. H. Burgess.

CLERKS OF SESSION

J. B. Hussey, J. G. Hall, H. C. Hamilton, H. C. Dixon, Dr. W. B. Ramsay, J. J. Willard, P. W. Bumbarger, Sr., Jack Spainhour, John R. Hay, Jr., C. M. Chumley, Jr., E. P. Tuttle, Guy Gregg, Gordon Thomasson.

CHURCH TREASURERS

N. M. Seagle, H. E. McComb, G. W. Hall, E. B. Cline, W. A. Hall, W. B. Menzies, J. J. Willard, Hubert Ramseur, R. L. Hefner, E. L. Ennis, W. E. Gosnold, W. W. McComb, John A. Springs, E. P. Tuttle, Mrs. E. P. Tuttle, Hudson Meacham, Robert Meuser

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Names mentioned in the minutes were: J. G. Hall, J. E. Haithcock, H. M. Doll, Dr. W. B. Ramsay, George W. Hall, R. J. Reveley, C. V. Garth, C. W. Irwin, J. L. Henderson, H. S. Balch, M. R. Steelman, Harry Burgess, G. Don Hammersla, Guy Gregg, Robert Bumbarger, Vernon Rubel, Dr. David Frye, O. K. Whittington, P. L. Lackey.

MEMBERS WHO HAVE GONE INTO CHURCH VOCATIONS

Dr. Mattie Ingold Tate to Korea; Rev. J. W. Hassell to Japan; Mrs. Louise Dixon Crane to Africa; Miss Ruby Satterfield to China; Rev. Henry Crane to Africa. Rev. Glenn Yount, Th.D-H.R.; Rev. Bonnar Knox; Miss Grace Henderson; Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Ramseur; Rev. Sidney Crane; Rev. Connolly Gamble, D. D.; Rev. Edward C. Hay, D. D.; John R. Hay, Jr.; Rev. William Bason; Mrs. Sidney (Betty) Frazer; Rev. W. W. Williamson, Jr.; Rev. Charles Williamson; Miss Ellen Bibee; Miss Jane Bibee; Mrs. Barry (Nancy) Farmer; Rev. Huw Christopher.

DIRECTORS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT FIRST CHURCH

Miss Kathleen Scott, Miss Nancy McNeely, Miss Malissa Christie, Miss Ann Heckemeyer, Rev. Klell Napps-Minister of Education, Miss Judith Loveless, Miss Margaret Ann McGeachy, Miss Carolyn Ledford.

STUDENTS FROM UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY HELPING AT FIRST CHURCH

Summer Assistants: Robert Crumby, Robert Watkin, Miss Caroline Goodman, Newton Todd, James Keller, Mr. and Mrs. John Wilson, Charles Speight, Russ Ward.
Full-year Interns: Dean Thompson, John Kaufman, Robert C. Hill, Judson Milam, Huw Christopher, Gerald Hurst.

Church Growth as shown by Statistical Reports to Presbytery*

***Statistics are by 20-year periods with one exception: 1964 is shown because 61 members had just transferred that year from First Church to Northminster Church.**

YEAR	ELDERS	DEACONS	MEMBERS	BENEVOLENCES	CURRENT EXPENSES	BUILDING FUND	TOTAL GIVING
1873	3	0	15	0	0	0	0
1892	6	6	115	$182.96	$1,064.55	_____	$1,247.51
1912	6	6	227	$1,630.00	$2,041.00	_____	$3,671.00
1932	11	14	353	$3,577.00	$3,297.00	$2,346.00	$9,673.00
1952	11	15	541	$17,909.00	$14,751.00	$4,050.00	$36,710.00
1964	17	18	718	$57,234.00	$56,244.00	$10,000.00	$123,478.00
1972	21	21	867	$60,692.00	$100,457.00	$10,696.00	$171,825.00

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Guy Gregg, Chairman

Sub-committees:

Program . . . . . .Dr. James Whaley, chairman; Connolly Gamble, Sr.; Sam Brock; Mrs. Charles Robinson; Mrs. Doris Sigmon.

Invitations . . . . . Miss Mildred Bingham, chairman; Miss Minnie Bingham; Mrs. Ramsay Abernethy; Mrs. W. N. Cowan; Mrs. R. H. McComb.

Memorial . . . . . Mrs. R. T. Hambrick, chairman; W. R. Ballew; Mrs. Charles Dixon; Dr. Shuford Abernethy.

Historical . . . . . Mrs. Edmond Smith, Jr., chairman;

Centennial Historians: Mrs. Edmond Smith, Jr.; Mr. Gerald Hurst; the Reverend J. Whitner Kennedy.

Museum: Mrs. Connolly Gamble, Sr.; Mrs. Wade Stemple; Mrs. Shuford Throneburg; Mrs. Gordon Thomasson.

Youth Production: Mrs. Harry Snyder, Jr.; Mr. Gerald Hurst; Mr. Mark Hoffman; Miss Sara Wells; Miss Mary Davis Dailey; Mr. Thomas Whittington; Mr. William Dixon.

Publicity . . . . . .Mr. and Mrs. James Lynch.

Open House and Fellowship Hour . . . . . ."Swingers" Sunday School Class

Birthday Party/Reception . . . . . Women of the Church.

THE CHURCH DIRECTORY

THE STAFF

MR. J. WHITNER KENNEDY, 825 2nd St., N. W. . . . . Minister
MR. DAY CARPER, 559 7th St., N. W. . . . . Assistant Minister
MR. GERALD B. HURST, 237 2nd St., N. W. . . . . Student Minister
MR. & MRS. C. BETTS HUNTLEY - Korea . . . . . Missionaries
MRS. MILTON O. BIBEE, 1234 11th St., N. W. . . . . Weekday Kindergarten
MISS BRENDA SMITH, 415 West "C" St., Newton, N. C. . . . . Organist
MR. RICHARD P. THOMPSON, 424 10th St. Pl., N. W. . . . . Choir Director
MR. ROBERT H. MEUSER, 850 2nd St., N. W. . . . . Treasurer
MRS. RAYMOND M. BOST, 740 4th St., N. E. . . . . Bookkeeper
MRS. D. W. HOFFMAN, 660 6th St., N. W. . . . . Secretary
MRS. R. E. MOSBY, 546 6th St., N. W. . . . . Hostess
MRS. DORIS COLEMAN, 411 1st St., S. E. . . . . Maid
MR. E. J. THOMPSON, 838 2nd St., S. W. . . . . Sexton

THE SESSION

Class

1973: Mrs. David Bissette, Mr. C. V. Garth, Mr. J. L. Houston, Jr., Mr. P. L. Lackey, Mr. C. A. Poole, Mr. Gordon W. Thomason.

1974: Mr. Hiram S. Balch, Mrs. Milton O. Bibee, Mr. James H. Bowman, Mr. George W. Brown, Jr., Mr. A. Harry Burgess, Mrs. William N. Cowan, Mr. Charles D. Dixon.

1975: Mr. T. Scott Bain, Mrs. R. LeRoy Campbell, Mr. F. Gwyn Harper, Jr., Mr. James M. Lynch, Jr., Mr. Al H. Stuckey, Mr. P. C. Underdown, Jr., Mr. Kenneth H. Bishop.

THE DIACONATE

Class

1973: Mr. Richard C. Brennecke, Mrs. Charles D. Dixon, Mr. A. C. Henderson, Jr., Mr. Donald C. Johnston, Mr. Thomas C. Lavender, Mr. Vernon Rubel.

1974: Mr. P. Severn Allen, Mr. John R. Goodwin, Mr. Rufus B. Hall, Dr. William R. Harris, Mr. Robert H. Meuser, Mr. Willard F. Smart, Sr., Mr. Karl G. Thomason.

1975: Mr. W. Ramsay Abernethy, Mr. William R. Ballew, Mr. Robert L. Campbell, Jr., Mr. Robert T. Hambrick, Jr., Mr. William P. Pitts, Mr. Wilfred A. Wells, Mr. Rodney H. Whitley.

TRUSTEES

Mr. C. V. Garth — Mr. A. H. Burgess — Mr. Donald S. Menzies

THE CHURCH SCHOOL

Mr. P. L. Lackey, Superintendent — Mr. William Ballew, Sec. — Mr. Roy E. Simpson, Asst. Superintendent

Pre-School Division . . . . . Mrs. Milton O. Bibee
Elementary Division . . . . . Mrs. Ronald Achor
Youth Division . . . . . Mr. John R. Goodwin
Adult Division . . . . . Thomas W. Jameson

THE WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

President . . . . . Mrs. Dan Espey
Vice-President . . . . . Mrs. Norman Neagle
Secretary . . . . . Mrs. William N. Cowan
Treasurer . . . . . Mrs. Robert Spurrier
Chm. Circle No. 1 . . . . . Mrs. Harry Snyder, Sr.
Chm. Circle No. 2 . . . . . Mrs. Robert Brantley
Chm. Circle No. 3 . . . . . Mrs. R. H. McComb
Chm. Circle No. 4 . . . . . Mrs. Albert N. Spencer
Chm. Circle No. 5 . . . . . Mrs. A. L. Simpson
Chm. Circle No. 6 . . . . . Mrs. James C. Tolleson
Chm. Circle No. 7 . . . . Mrs. Stephen L. Lovekin
Chm. Circle No. 8 . . . . . Mrs. Henry S. Belk
Chm. Circle No. 9 . . . . . Mrs. Larry W. Cates
Chm. Circle No. 10 . . . . . Mrs. Warner T. Smith
Chm. Circle No. 11 . . . . Mrs. Kenneth H. Bishop
Chm. Circle No. 12 . . Mrs. Ralph M. Hungerpillar
Chm. Circle No. 13 . . . . . Mrs. Fred Moon

THE YOUTH GROUPS

7th Grade Fellowship . . . . . Mr. & Mrs. Brad Peters
Mr. & Mrs. Rodney Whitley
8th & 9th Grade Fellowship . . . . . Mr. & Mrs. Fred Moon, Mrs. Jim Peed
Senior High Fellowship . . . . . Mr. & Mrs. Robert Gayle, Mr. and Mrs. Boyd Spurrier

SCOUTS

Brownie Scouts . . . . . Mrs. Charles Craft, Mrs. William Hamilton, Mrs. Ed Hendrix
Junior Girl Scouts . . . . . Mrs. Thomas Lavender, Mrs. John Goodwin, Mrs. Fred Larkin
Cub Scout Pack 231: Den Mothers: Mrs. Hope Councill, Mrs. Shirley Ballew, Mrs. Jean Gwyn
Cubmaster . . . . . Mr. John Goodwin
Chairman of Pack Committee . . . . . Jack MacMillan
Webelos: Dr. William Brooks, Vernon Flowers, Robert L. Campbell, Jr., Robert Fullwood
Boy Scout Troop 231 . . . . . Scoutmaster, Marvin Williams
Chairman of Troop Committee . . . . . Dr. David G. Frye, Jr.
Institutional Representative . . . . . Mr. Brooks L. Todd

CHANCEL CHOIR

President: Mrs. C. A. Yount — Sec.-Treas: C. A. Yount — Librarian: Miss Nancy Brown

THE USHERS GUILD

President: J. Henry Hill, Jr. — Vice-President: Karl G. Thomason

DATE DUE

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